I am writing this article for the newsletter 2 days after our August Union meeting which was primarily about Health Insurance. Quite a few retirees attended the meeting to voice their opinions on the high cost that they will have to pay starting October 1st. Their new monthly payments have more than doubled. For some, this is more than their monthly pension check.

As you all know we have struggled financially for the past year and a half in the Health & Welfare fund. The trustees, both the labor and management sides, have tried many different changes to try and stop the decline in the fund. All of you have received the letters about all of these cuts and changes over the past year and a half. Despite everything that had been done the Health Fund was still operating in the red. We would have one positive month then two or three bad ones. So, based on the recommendation of the fund's attorney and our actuary, the trustees were told that our local could no longer subsidize the retirees and the apprentices. None of the trustees wanted to do this but legally and financially we had to or we wouldn't be able to pay the claims we were responsible for. We, the trustees, have truly tried everything we could to try and keep the plan afloat.

(continued)
Continuity for UA Welding or Medical Gas Certification will be held on Wednesday, August 25th at 6:00 pm. Please call in advance so adequate support staff can be scheduled.

2004 - 2005 Academic Training:
The school year for Apprentices and Pipe Tradesman will begin on Tuesday, September 7th at 6pm. The first term course schedule and the 2004 - 2005 Academic year calendar has been sent to all of the individuals required to attend.

Other Training:
Members to be notified off of current Training sign up sheets.

Thursdays: 6 - 9 pm
September 30th - January 27th
Medical Gas Installer:
Pipe Designer 3D:

Tuesdays: 6 - 9 pm:
October 5th - January 25th
Welding:

UA Weld Test: Sign up NOW for the next test event, which is tentatively scheduled for September 25th.

OSHA 10-hour Safety Training:
Sign up NOW for Saturday, October 23rd & 30th. Attendance required both days for certification.

Next Plumbing Seminar:
Monday, November 8th at 6:30 pm.

Local News
Our salting program at Pizzagalli is complete. The company believes pipe fitters are worth $14/hr. When talks broke down, they laid-off all our guys. I am currently in various stages of conversation with ten mechanical contractors, including subbing work from Youngblood with one of our contractors.

The NH Building Trades
At this time we are encouraging support for these candidates.

Governor
John Lynch
US Congress
District 1 Justin Nadeau
US Congress
District 2 Paul Hodes
State Senate
District 23 Magee Hassan
State Senate
District 18 Dave Gelinas
State Rep.
District 5 Joe Donahue
State Rep.
District 67 Richard Heon
State Rep.
District 41 Bob Martel

News from the AFL-CIO
We are working with the Building Trades putting together labor walks to labor households to get out and vote in this very important election. You'll be hearing from our Political Action Committee.

Fraternally, Tim Poulin
Notices:
Deceased: Omer Gill, Russell Bell, Winston Noreen

With all their faults, trade unions have done more for humanity than any other organization of men that ever existed. They have done more for decency, for honesty, for education, for the betterment of the race, for the developing of character in men, than any other association of men.

Clarence Darrow

This is a very important election year we all need to get the message out on who are the best candidates for us, the working families. Just ask yourself one question,” Am I better off today than I was 3 ½ years ago.” If the answer is no, then we need to change the politicians that are in Washington, DC. Please read all the flyers that you get in the mail and then make your decision on who to vote for.

Fraternally, Dennis